

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 OIC-02 INRE-00 SSO-00 IO-11 ISO-00 NSCE-00

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PASS STR

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: MTN ETRD GATT

SUBJ: SECTORS GROUP MEETING, APRIL 6-7, 1976

1. SUMMARY. SECTORS GROUP MET FOR FOURTH MEETING
APRIL 6 AND 7. AS EXPECTED, DISCUSSION OF AGENDA
ITEMS ON DATA GATHERING EXERCISES WAS PREFUNCTORY AND
BASIC VIEWS OF DELEGATIONS ON OTHER ISSUES WERE UNCHANGED.

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CANADIANS ELABORATED ON THEIR PROPOSAL TO LIBERALIZE

TRADE IN COPPER PRODUCTS. PROPOSAL WAS STRONGLY ATTACKED BY EC, JAPAN AND OTHERS AND DEFENDED AT LENGTH BY CANADA. CANADA STATED ITS INTENTION TO MAKE PROPOSALS AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME FOR SECTOR NEGOTIATIONS ON COPPER NICKEL, LEAD, ZINC, AND WOOD PRODUCTS, US MADE STRONG STATEMENT OF INTENTION TO PUT BEFORE THE GROUP AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME, SPECIFIC PROPOSAL FOR NEGOTIATING ON STEEL SECTOR, CITING SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND CYCLICAL PROBLEMS. JAPAN ATTEMPTED, UNSUCCESSFULLY, TO REMOVE STATEMENT OF US AND CANADIAN INTENTIONS FROM CHAIRMAN'S SUMMING-UP. SECRETARIAT, ON INDIA'S INITIATIVE, WILL DO FEASIBILITY STUDY OF HANDICRAFTS AS A PRODUCT GROUP. NEXT MEETING TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR AFTER SUMMER BREAK. END SUMMARY.

2. CANADIAN COPPER PROPOSAL.

(A) CANADA (MEL CLARK) ELABORATED ON ITS COPPER PROPOSAL (MTN/SEC/W/7). CANADIAN STATEMENT (POUCHED) NOTED PROPOSAL'S GENERAL APPLICABILITY TO RESOURCE-BASED INDUSTRIES WITH COMMON CHARACTERISTICS: LARGE CAPITAL REQUIREMENT; LONG INVESTMENT LEAD TIME; IMPORTING COUNTRIES' NEED FOR SUPPLY; AND RESOURCE NON-RENEWABILITY OR LONG-RENEWING PERIOD. OBJECTIVE OF PROPOSAL IS TO GO BEYOND GENERAL APPROACHES AND THUS EXPAND TRADE FOR PROCESSED AND FINISHED PRODUCTS UNDER STABLE CONDITIONS. PRINCIPAL POINTS OF CANADIAN ELABORATION WERE: TARIFFS, WHICH THEY WANT TO ELIMINATE OR REDUCE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE; NON TARIFF MEASURES WHICH ARE TO BE BROUGHT UNDER AN EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL DISCIPLINE; AND ADDITIONAL GATT RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS TO ENSURE THAT LIBERALIZATION IS NOT IMPAIRED. IN RESPONSE TO PREVIOUS CRITICISMS, CANADA INCLUDED COMMENTS WITH RESPECT TO: SECURITY OF SUPPLIES, RECIPROCITY, LOCATION OF EXISTING PLANTS, DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, PROLIFERATION OF SECTORS AND TIMING OF SECTOR NEGOTIATIONS.

(B) EC (MALTZAHN OF COMMISSION INDUSTRIAL DIRECTORATE) MADE THOROUGH ATTACK ON CANADIAN PROPOSAL. IN LONG, POINT-BY-POINT INTERVENTION, EC NOTED IN PARTICULAR THAT COPPER DOES NOT HAVE SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS TO MERIT SECTOR NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT PROPOSAL RAISES FEAR OF AN AVALANCHE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF SECTORS THAT WOULD UNDERMINE MTN GENERAL APPROACHES. EC VIEWS SECTORS AS A COMPLEMENTARY TECHNIQUE WHICH IS NOW PREMATURE BUT FOR WHICH THERE WILL BE TIME LATER. EC ALSO LISTED TECHNICAL PROBLEMS, SUCH AS DIFFICULTY OF COMPUTING EFFECTIVE RATES AND NEED FOR LINE ITEM CONCORDANCES TO IMPLEMENT CANADIAN SECTORS TARIFF APPROACH, EC ALSO PLAYED ON LDC FEARS OF EROSION OF GSP MARGINS AS ARGUMENT AGAINST PROPOSAL.

(C) SWEDEN (ANHUSEN) FOR NORDICS EXPRESSED APPREHENSION THAT CANADIAN PROPOSAL WOULD HAMPER GENERAL SOLUTIONS, AND SAID PROPOSAL DID NOT OFFER CONVINCING EVIDENCE THAT IT WOULD LEAD TO GREATER LIBERALIZATION IN COPPER TRADE.

(D) SWISS (EBERHARD) OPPOSED BECAUSE PROPOSAL WOULD LEAD TO FRAGMENTATION OF NEGOTIATIONS. SWISS NOTED THAT GATT OBLIGATIONS ARE PRIMARILY THOSE OF IMPORTERS AND NOTED NEED FOR DISCIPLINE FOR EXPORTERS. SWISS SEEK ANSWER TO QUESTION OF SUPPLY ACCESS BUT PREFER ADDRESS IT IN THE WIDER PERSPECTIVE OF GATT RULES. SWISS COMPLAINED NO PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN PRICING AGAINST FOREIGN USERS AND ASKED WHAT WAS IN IT FOR OTHERS.

(E) JAPAN (TERADA) IN A SHORT, BLUNT STATEMENT AGREED WITH EC, NORDICS AND SWITZERLAND THAT SECTORS SHOULD FOLLOW IN TIME THE GENERAL APPROACHES SO THAT ACTION NOW IS PREMATURE. QUESTION FOR JAPAN WAS HOW TO USE THE SECTOR APPROACH FOR GREATER LIBERALIZATION, SUGGESTING THAT THE FRAGMENTATION INHERENT IN THE CANADIAN PROPOSAL WOULD LEAD TO MINIMUM OF LIBERALIZATION.

(F) US (MCNAMARA) RAISED QUESTIONS ABOUT CANADIAN PROPOSAL; HOW DOES IT GO BEYOND NTM PROPOSALS MADE IN OTHER MTN GROUPS; WHAT BENEFITS WILL ACCRUE TO IMPORTERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE WITH SIGNIFICANT PROCESSING INDUSTRIES; HOW WOULD SUPPOSED NEUTRALITY OF SYSTEMS EXTEND TO THE INDUSTRIAL AND INVESTMENT POLICIES OF THE RESOURCE-RICH COUNTRIES; WOULD PROVISIONS IN REGARD TO TAXES AND LICENSING POLICIES OF PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES ALSO BE COVERED; AND COULD CANADIAN DELEGATION COMMENT ON THE FACT THAT IN 1973 SCRAP ACCOUNTED FOR 40 PERCENT OF COPPER REFINING WHEREAS THEIR PROPOSAL IMPLIED THAT PROCESSING FACILITIES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SHOULD BE IN RESOURCE AREAS.

(G) ON SECOND DAY, CANADA GAVE LONG, ARGUMENTATIVE RESPONSE TO INTERVENTIONS OF OTHERS: (1) CANADA DOES NOT INTERPRET COMPLEMENTARY TECHNIQUE TO MEAN LATER SINCE THEY BELIEVE LATER MEANS NEVER. COMPLEMENTARY MEANS, TO THE CANADIANS, THAT IT DOES NOT REPLACE THE GENERAL APPROACH AND IT IS A COMPLETION OF THE BASIC OBJECTIVES.

(2) FABRICATING PLANS ARE OF TWO TYPES: THOSE WITH SHORT-RUN PRODUCTION WHICH ARE MARKET-ORIENTED AND THEREFORE LOCATED CLOSE TO THE MARKET, OTHERS WITH LONGER RUN PRODUCTION WHICH SHOULD BE LOCATED CLOSER TO THE SMELTER. SECONDARY REFINING WILL REMAIN IN THE DEVELOPED COUNTRIES BECAUSE OF THE NEUTRALITY OF THE SYSTEM.

(3) COPPER ALONE DOES NOT JUSTIFY A SEPARATE SECTOR BUT NONRENEWABLE RESOURCES, ESPECIALLY THE SUPPLY CONCERNS,

DO JUSTIFY THIS. (4) TARIFF ESCALATION AND EFFECTIVE PROTECTION MAY BE DIFFICULT TO MEASURE BUT ARE SEEN AS AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE ECONOMICS OF THIS INDUSTRY. CANADA GAVE EXAMPLES OF PRODUCTS WITH LOW NOMINAL RATES BUT HIGH EFFECTIVE RATES. (5) RISK OF PROLIFERATION OF SECTORS OR FRAGMENTATION INTO AN ITEM-BY-ITEM NEGOTIATION WAS NOT VIEWED AS A PROBLEM BECUASE THEIR VIEW OF SECTORS WAS THAT THEY WOULD GO FURTHER THAN THE GENEAL APPROACHES. (6) THE NTMS WERE COVERED SPECIFICALLY IN THIS SECTOR PROPOSAL FOR A NUMBER OF DIFFERENT REASONS: GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT HAD BEEN TREATEDIN THE OECD FOR MANY YEARS WITH NO ASSURANCE OF SUCCESS NOW IN THE MTN WHILE THE CANADIAN PROPOSAL GOES FURTHER THAN ANY OF THE OCED PROPOSALS. ON COUNTERVAILING, EMERGENCY ACTION AND ANTIDUMPING CANADA WANTS ADDITIONAL RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS SPECIFICALLY TAILORED TO RESOURCE INDUSTRIES. IN ALL OFTHE NTMS, THE CANADIAN PROPOSAL WOULD GO FURTHER THAN THE GENERAL APPROACH. ON DISPUTE SETTLEMENT, THE CANADIANS FORESEE ONE PERMANENT PANEL THAT WOULD COVER MANY NTMS OR SECTOR PROBLEMS. CANADIANS COMMENTED THAT EC FEAR OF SECTORAL FRAGMENTATION OF NTM SOLUTIONS WAS INCON- SISTENT WITH EC POSITION ELSEWHERE THAT GENERAL NTM SOLUTIONS DO NOT APPLY TO AGRICULTURAL P ADP766 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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(H) IN REGARD TO THE REMAINING US QUESTIONS, THE CANADIANS ARGUE THERE IS NO PROVINCIAL VERSUS FEDERAL PROBLEM BECAUSE: (1) THE OBJECTIVE OF THE POLICY OF EXPANSION OF THE PROCESSING INDUSTRIES HAS BEEN CAREFULLY WORKED OUT WITH THE PROVINCES. (2) UNDER THE CANADIAN CONSTITUTION THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS AUTHORITY OVER FOREIGN AND INTERPROVINCIAL TRADE AND (3) CANADA WILL NOT UNDERTAKE OBLIGATIONS IT CANNOT CARRY OUT. CANADIANS COMPLAINED THAT THIS QUESTION WAS TOO HYPOTHETICAL AND ABSTRACT TO ADDRESS DIRECTLY. IMPORTERS ARE SEEN AS ACHIEVING BENEFITS THROUGH AVOIDING MISALLOCATION OF RESOURCES AND COSTS
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INVOLVED IN SUCH MISALLOCATION.

(I) CANADA STATED THAT AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME THEY ENVISAGE MAKING PROPOSALS FOR SECTOR NEGOTIATIONS ON COPPER, NICKEL, LEAD, ZINC, AND WOOD PRODUCTS. CANADA SUGGESTED GROUP REFLECT ON HOW THESE MIGHT BE ORGANIZED THROUGH SUBGROUPS OR WOULD SOMETHING ELSE BE MORE EFFECTIVE. CANADA INDICATED THAT A NONFERROUS METALS SECTOR (PRESUMABLY LIMITED TO THEIR METALS) MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE.

(J) CHILE FOR THE ANDEAN GROUP SUPPORTED CANADA'S STATEMENT THAT THE DATA ON ESCALATION AND OTHER PROBLEMS JUSTIFIED THE SECTORAL APPROACH FOR COPPER. CHILE WOULD LIKE TO SEE SPECIAL AND DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT EXTENDED TO FINANCING AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY. HE STATED, HOWEVER, THAT SUPPLY RULES SHOULD NOT BE COMPULSORY.

(K) BRAZIL ALSO GAVE GENERAL SUPPORT FOR CANADIAN PROPOSAL BUT CONDITIONED IT ON NEED FOR MORE ACCURATE ANALYSIS, THE NEED FOR SPECIAL AND DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT AND FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF SUPPLY.

(L) MEXICO DID NOT WANT TO RUSH BUT NOTED THAT IF SECTORS GROUPS WERE INITIATED ON SOME MINERALS, THEY WOULD WANT SECTORS OF INTEREST TO LDCS CONSIDERED ALSO.

3. STEEL AND OTHER METALS.

(A) US (MCNAMARA) OPENED DISCUSSION ON ORES AND METALS STUDY WITH STRONG STATEMENT ON US INTENTION TO PUT BEFORE THE GROUP AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME IN THE FUTURE, A SPECIFIC PROPOSAL FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON THE STEEL SECTOR. WITHOUT GOING INTO DETAIL, HE NOTED IMPORTANCE OF STEEL INDUSTRIES AND UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS AND SINGULAR PROBLEMS WHICH EXIST THERE. HE NOTED TRADE-DISTORTING PRACTICES DURING CYCLICAL FLUCTUATIONS AND ESPECIALLY PROBLEMS DURING RECENT RECESSIONARY PERIOD. HE POINTED OUT THAT ANY FAR-REACHING TRADE

LIBERALIZATION WILL REQUIRE SOME DEGREE OF INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT ON PERMISSABLE MEASURES TO DEAL WITH RAPID SHIFTS IN TRADE PATTERNS DURING CYCLICAL SWINGS.

(B) JAPAN (TERADA) INTERVENED IMMEDIATELY, EXPRESSING DOUBT THAT LIBERALIZATION AND PREVENTION OF CYCLICAL DISTORTIONS CAN BE ACHIEVED THROUGH THE SECTOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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APPROACH. JAPAN NOTED THAT MANY BASIC INDUSTRIES HAD SUFFERED FROM INFLATION, EXCHANGE RATE, AND CYCLICAL PROBLEMS DURING THE RECENT RECESSION AND DOUBTED THAT STEEL HAS SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS. RATHER, THE PROBLEMS OF SOME STEEL INDUSTRIES (READ US) ARE INDUSTRIAL PRACTICES THAT MAKE THEM LESS COMPETITIVE. THEY ALSO EXPRESSED SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT THE PROPOSAL BECAUSE IT MAY LEAD DOWNSTREAM TO OTHER PRODUCTS MADE FROM STEEL.

(C) NORDICS, IN ONLY OTHER INTERVENTION ON US STATEMENT, EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT SUCH A PROPOSAL WOULD LEAD TO GREATER LIBERALIZATION THAN THE GENERAL APPROACH.

(D) EC (DUGIMONT), WITHOUT COMMENTING ON US STATEMENT ON STEEL, MADE STATEMENT ON GENERAL ORES AND METALS STUDIES TENDING TO POINT OUT THEIR WEAKNESSES. SOME OF THESE WEAKNESSES WERE: DIVERGENCIES BETWEEN PROJECTIONS OF VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS; VERY WIDE MARGINS BETWEEN THE HYPOTHESIS BASED ON HIGH AND LOW DEMAND; AND THE FACT THAT PROJECTIONS MADE SOME TIME AGO. HE NOTED PROJECTIONS SEEM TO DEPEND ON THE BODY MAKING THEM AND THE TIME AT WHICH THEY WERE MADE. EC REQUESTED THAT IF NEW PROJECTIONS WERE MADE, THEN THE SECRETARIA MIGHT SUBMIT THEM TO THE GROUP.

4. LDC SECTORS. PAPERS ON SECTORS OF INTEREST TO LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES DREW VERY LITTLE COMMENT.

5. OTHER SECTORS. UNDER DISCUSSION OF OTHER SECTORS, INDIA SUGGESTED DETAILED STUDY OF HANDICRAFT SECTOR BECAUSE IT WOULD GIVE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO LDCS. AT CHAIRMAN'S SUGGESTION, GROUP AGREED TO ASK SECRETARIAT TO DO FEASIBILITY STUDY OF HOW TO APPROACH DEFINITIONS AND PROBLEM OF HANDLING HANDICRAFTS AS SEPARATE SECTOR. EC NOTED THAT THEY ARE OPERATING A SCHEME FOR HANDICRAFTS, PARTICULARLY TEXTILE AND LEATHER PRODUCTS, USING A CERTIFICATION SYSTEM AND SUGGESTED SECRETARIAT PAPER ON DIFFERENT DC HANDICRAFT CUSTOMS TREATMENT.

6. AFTER THE READING BY THE CHAIRMAN OF HIS DRAFT SUMMING-UP (SEPTTEL, JAPAN INTERVENED TO OBJECT TO THE INCLUSION IN THE SUMMING-UP OF THE US AND CANADIAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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STATEMENTS OF INTENTION TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS. IN A
CONFUSED DIALOGUE JAPAN OBJECTED TO THE INCLUSION OF
ANY STATEMENT OF INTENTIONS SINCE THEY WERE NOT REAL
PROPOSALS. JAPAN FINALLY ACCEPTED A STATEMENT WHICH
RECORDED ITS STRONG APPREHENSION ABOUT THE US AND
CANADIAN STATEMENTS. IN A SHORT INTERVENTION, NORDICS
WISHED TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH JAPANESE RESERVATION N THE
APPROPRIATNESS OF STEEL FOR SECTOR NEGOTIATIONS.

7. THE GROUP AGREED THA THE NEXT MEETING WOUOLD BE HELD
IN THE FALL ("PREFERABLY IMMEDIATELY AFTER SUMMER
RECESS", AT CALL OF CHAIRMAN), WHILE CANADIANS EXPRESSED
THE EXPECTATION THAT IT WOULD BE HELD PRIOR TO THE FALL
MEETING OF THE TARIFFS GROUP. THIS FORMULATION WOULD
PERMIT A MEETING BEFORE RECESS, IF KEY DELEGATONS
AGREED.

8. COMMENT. MEETING PROCEEDED AS EXPECTED. US MADE
ITS STATEMENT ON STEEL IN CLEAR, BQT GENERAL TERMS, WHILE
AVOIDING LONG CONTENTIOUS DISCUSSIN. JAPANESE STRONG
NEGATIVE REACTION ON US STATEMENT OF INTENTION AND
ATTEMPT TO CHANGE SUMMING-UP ARE HARBINGER OF JAPANESE
POSITION ON STEEL SECTOR NEGOTIATIONS. WE PRIVATELY SUGGESTED TO EC T
HAT IT
WAIT FOR US PROPOSAL ON STEEL BEOFE REACTING, BUT
WE SUSPECT THERE MAY BE OTHER REASONS FOR EC NONREACTION.
THE STUDY OF THE FEASIBILITY OF A HANDICRAFT
SECTOR IS NOT ESPECIALLY DESIRABLE BUT NO ONE
OBJECTED. INDIAN OBJECTIVE IS TARIFF RECLASSIFICATION TO
EXOUT HANDICRAFTS FOR DUTY-FREE TREATMENT. CHAIRMAN
(TOMIC) DID SKILLFUL AND BALANCED JOB. WALKER

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